metro
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Thursday, December 14, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroNewYork | f: MetroNewY

GIFT GUIDE

Christmas is nearly here, we put together a few gift ideas. 22-31

Ben Bailey spills the secrets of 'Cash Cab.' 19

Don't expect Yanks to get Machado. 37

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WINTER READY

The weather outside is frightful, but the NYC Ferry tells us how it's ready to cruise through the cold weather into the new year. 4

NIKKI M. MASCALI, GETTY IMAGES, PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

WELCOME TO METRO.US

NIKKI M. MASCALI, REPORTER

With 2.8 million rides, the NYC Ferry has offered an alternative to the issue-laden subway — and great views of our fair city — but is it a practical option now that it's cold out? NYC Ferry officials answer that burning question and tell us what 2018 will bring. Read more on **page 4** or visit **metro.us.**

JUDGE ORDERS NY BOMBER DETAINED AHEAD OF TRIAL

1 The Bangladeshi man accused of attempting a suicide bombing in a busy New York City commuter hub will remain in federal custody while he awaits trial on charges that include supporting a foreign terrorist organization, a judge ruled. Akayed Ullah appeared by video for a hearing from his bed in Bellevue Hospital, where he was recovering from injuries he suffered when his homemade bomb ignited but failed to detonate. Ullah was covered with a white blanket and remained largely expressionless as Magistrate Judge Katharine Parker told him that he had a right to an attorney and did not have to make any statements. Assistant U.S. Attorney Shawn Crowley asked that Ullah be detained without bail. Ullah's court-appointed attorney, Amy Gallichio, did not dispute the request, meaning her client that will not be released on bail.

MINNESOTA LT. GOV. TO REPLACE FRANKEN

2 Minnesota's Democratic Lt. Gov. Tina Smith was appointed as U.S. senator on Wednesday to replace Al Franken, who resigned after being accused of sexual harassment. Smith, 59, will serve a one-year term concluding in January 2019, Governor Mark Dayton said at a news conference, and will run in a special election for the seat in November next year. Dayton said he listened to the views of many Minnesotans before deciding on Smith. "There is no one I trust more to assume the responsibilities of this important office," Dayton said. "I know that she will be a superb senator, representing the best interests of our state and our citizens." Smith told reporters at the news conference that she will be a fierce advocate on behalf of the state, pushing for economic opportunity and fairness.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

GETTY IMAGES

DEEP FREEZE

3 Pedestrians walk through steam coming up from a manhole in Lower Manhattan on Wednesday in New York City. According to the National Weather Service, the cold temperatures and wind gusts of up to 40 mph were making it feel as cold as 15 degrees.

UN EXPERT: TORTURE PERSISTS AT GITMO

4 An independent U.N. human rights investigator said that he had information about an inmate being tortured at the U.S. Guantanamo Bay detention facility, despite Washington banning "enhanced interrogation techniques" almost 10 years ago. The U.S. Department of Defense denied the allegation, saying there was no credible evidence to support it. Nils Melzer, the U.N. special rapporteur on torture, said he had information that Ammar al-Baluchi — accused of being a co-conspirator in the 9/11 attacks on the United States — was being subjected to treatment that is banned under international law. "His torture and ill-treatment are reported to continue," a statement from the U.N. human rights office said, without giving details of the source of Melzer's information.

WH: NOT RIGHT TIME FOR NORTH KOREA TALKS

5 No negotiations can be held with North Korea until it improves its behavior, a White House official said on Wednesday, raising questions about U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's offer to begin talks with Pyongyang any time and without pre-conditions. "Given North Korea's most recent missile test, clearly right now is not the time," a White House official told Reuters. Tillerson said on Tuesday the United States was "ready to talk any time North Korea would like to talk," appearing to back away from a key U.S. demand that Pyongyang must first accept that any negotiations would have to be about giving up its nuclear arsenal. The White House has declined to say whether President Donald Trump, who has taken a tougher rhetorical line against North Korea than Tillerson, gave approval for the overture.

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New York City Ferry cruises into cold weather season

Passengers can expect some warm amenities as frigid temperatures hit the city.

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After a record first six months, the NYC Ferry is cruising into the cold weather. NYC FERRY

Now that winter seems to have New York City in its cold grip, you may be wondering how the weather is going to affect the NYC Ferry, which quickly became a popular alternative to the issue-plagued subway since its May launch.

"Weather and precipitation are a big driver of whether people decide to take the ferry or not," said Paul Lambson, head of rider success for NYC Ferry. "We've seen a little drop off."

To that end, the ferry schedule was altered slightly in early November, which saw the removal of some midday boats.

But when the snow and long stretches of frigid temperatures do come for good, "we expect very minimal impact," added Jonathan Figueroa, director of operations, facilities and support services. "It takes a lot for us to have delays and service changes — like heavy storms, blizzard conditions."

But just as the ferries offered cool drinks and air conditioning during the hot summer months, passengers can expect amenities fitting to this time of year.

"NYC Ferry is a great way to get around the city 365 days a year," said Stephanie Baez of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. "From hot chocolate and coffee on board to windscreens and heaters on our landings, we're making sure that all of our riders will have a safe and comfortable commute through the winter months."

Some of the major connecting or transfer landings, such as Pier 11/Wall Street and East 34th Street, have covered waiting areas.

NYC Ferry looks back, forward

With 2.8 million rides since its launch on May 1, the NYC Ferry was an obvious success, but it wasn't without hiccups.

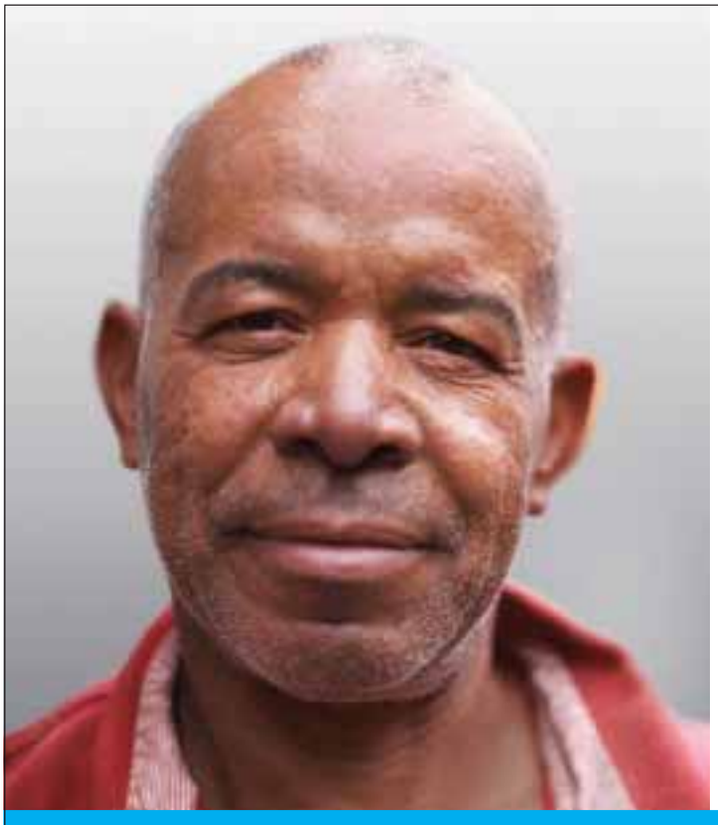
There were complaints about delays and overcrowding, which saw officials chartering additional boats to meet demand. Some vessels were taken out of service recently for repairs. In late November, a ferry ran aground just off Wall Street. No injuries were reported, but passengers were stranded for about 45 minutes, the New York Daily News reported.

Both Lambson and Figueroa cited the unexpected demand for some of those issues.

"There were twice as many people as all our studies had said, our forecasts had said," Lambson added. "We were adding boats without understanding what impact that would have on the live schedule. Now we know how this works a little better, and we'll make some little adjustments."

Additionally, principal construction on the NYC Ferry homeport at the Brooklyn Navy Yard is completed, and operations at the 56,000-square-foot facility is slated to commence in early 2018, the EDC said.

"... we're making sure that all of our riders will have a safe and comfortable commute through the winter months."
Stephanie Baez



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December 14 & 28, January 10
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Fourth Floor Conference Room

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1833 Lexington Avenue
Manhattan

January 20
12:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Gymnasium

NYC Health+Hospitals | Queens

82-68 164th Street
Queens

December 15, January 12
12:00 PM to 2:00 PM
Auditorium

NYC Health+Hospitals | Elmhurst

79-01 Broadway
Queens

December 15, January 19
12:00 PM to 2:00 PM
Room A1-22

MetroPlus Queens Community Office

92-14 Roosevelt Avenue
Queens

January 26
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Conference Room

MetroPlus Brooklyn Community Office

2221 Church Avenue
Brooklyn

December 15 & 16
8:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Conference Room

NYC Health+Hospitals | Coney Island

2601 Ocean Parkway
Brooklyn

December 19, January 28
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Room 1N65

East New York D&TC

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Cold snap hits NYC

Oh, the weather outside is frightful.

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Bundle up — it's going to be a cold week here in New York City, the National Weather Service said. GETTY IMAGES

It had to happen sometime, right? After a fairly mild fall, winter weather hits New York City at full force this week.

Temperatures early Wednesday morning were in the low 20s and are expected to hit a high near 31, which may feel a lot colder thanks to gusty winds as high as 40 mph, according to the National Weather Service. The winds will continue into Wednesday night, which will see a high near 29.

There is a 60 percent chance of snow between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. Thursday, but accumulation is expected to be less than half an inch, the NWS said.

Thursday's high will hover near 34 before dropping to around 23 degrees in the evening.

Friday will be mostly cloudy with a high near 32, while Saturday is expected to be mostly sunny with a high near 37.

This cold snap isn't hitting just New York, though.

"In fact, much of the East Coast will see high temperatures today around 10 degrees below average," the NWS said Wednesday.

Tips for staying warm

Naturally, your warmest coats, gloves and hats should be among your fashion choices for the remainder of this week, and dressing in layers is recommended, as is staying indoors as much as possible.

If you are staying in and have no heat or hot water, city officials urge you to call your super or landlord, and, if the situation is not rectified, call 311 as soon as possible.

Check on family, friends and neighbors, especially the elderly, and if you see someone who you suspect is homeless and in need of help, dial 311 to alert the Department of Homeless Services.

Don't forget to keep your furkids safe, too, by keeping walks as short as possible and wiping their paws and stomach when you come home to remove salt and other harmful chemicals that may be on the sidewalks this time of year.

Remember: Water your Christmas trees

Protect yourself and your home this holiday season with fire safety tips. GETTY IMAGES

Christmas trees signify love, life (unless it's Home Depot artificial) and happiness — and we've learned a lot of things about them this year.

For starters, there's a scarce supply in some parts of the country. They could be filled with bugs on bugs (up to 25,000), and there are, as it turns out, ways to decorate them like never before (think vertical lights).

With the holiday season in full swing — and your trees hopefully decked out to the fullest — it's important to keep safety in mind.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recently came out with a public service announcement warning people about the dangers of parched Christmas trees. If under-watered, they will burn faster than newspaper and be engulfed in flames in seconds, while watered spruce won't catch flame nearly as quickly. "Safety should be part of all your decorating efforts," said CPSC Acting Chairman Ann Marie Buerkle in an online statement. "Make sure your live Christmas tree has plenty of water, keep lit candles away from flammable items, and use caution when standing on a ladder or a chair to hang decorations."

The CPSC site also provide further tips to prevent trees from catching fire. A few of the most important include:

- Buy a tree that is fresh
- Pick a "fire resistant" artificial tree
- Avoid breakable decorations
- Place trees away from heat sources
- Extinguish all candles before leaving a room
- Have working smoke alarms on every floor

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reported that U.S. fire departments responded to an annual average of 200 home Christmas tree fires between 2011 and 2015. Each year, these fires caused an average of six deaths, 16 injuries and $14.8 million in direct property damage. SAM BRODSKY

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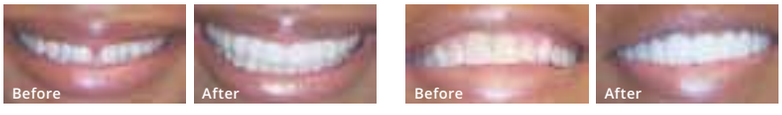

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NYU moves tech hub into long-empty former MTA headquarters

The former home of the MTA headquarters in Downtown Brooklyn has a new tenant: New York University.

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A long-vacant MTA building has been given a tech-filled new life.

New York University announced Wednesday that the school's Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) has moved into 370 Jay Street in Downtown Brooklyn, a site that was previously home to the headquarters of the New York City Transit Authority.

The New York City Transit Authority, which became part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in 1968, created the headquarters and set up shop on Jay Street in 1953.

The MTA then began moving out of 370 Jay Street in 1990 as the Transit Authority relocated to a new headquarters. Now, NYU's move into that location marks the building's first tenant in decades, a milestone for the university and part of a trend in Brooklyn toward a tech-filled future.

"The opening of 370 Jay Street is a testament to several ambitions: to advance NYU's tech efforts, to strengthen our connection to Brooklyn and to support Brooklyn's and the city's evolution into a world center for creative engineering and technology innovation," said Andrew Hamilton, president of NYU, in a statement.

CUSP is currently occupying the 530,000-square-foot building's top two floors to continue its mission of using "data and social sciences to understand and improve cities," tackling topics like homelessness and pollution to crowded public transportation (something New Yorkers know all too well).

The building is still undergoing renovations and is set to be fully occupied in 2019. The finished building will feature audio labs, motion-capture labs, virtual reality rooms, workshop spaces, an exhibit hall and classrooms.

More NYU programs will eventually move into 370 Jay Street as well, like other Tandon School of Engineering programs and three departments from the Tisch School of the Arts.

"Ultimately it is our vision that 370 Jay Street will house engineers, research scientists, game designers, media artists and musicians — all interacting and collaborating under one roof," Hamilton said. "It's particularly fitting that CUSP, an interdisciplinary center dedicated to leveraging data and technology to tackle some of the world's most challenging urban problems, will be the building's inaugural tenant."

NYU is able to take over 370 Jay Street because the university won a 99-year lease for the building in 2012 through the Applied Science NYC initiative.

With that win, NYU also took on the responsibility of paying the $50 million associated with the relocation of the MTA equipment, according to the transit authority. It's still a benefit to give GUSP this new home, officials said, as research completed and technologies created at the center are expected to generate an economic impact of $5.5 billion and 7,700 jobs over the next three decades.

A rendering of the completely renovated 370 Jay Street in Downtown Brooklyn. PROVIDED BY NYU

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Republicans craft tax deal; final vote expected next week

Speaker Paul Ryan looks on as President Trump discusses tax reform in the Cabinet Room of the White House. GETTY IMAGES

The bill would be the first major legislative victory for Trump and the Republicans since they took control of the White House and both chambers of Congress.

Congressional Republicans reached a deal on final tax legislation Wednesday, clearing the way for final votes next week on a package that would slash the U.S. corporate tax rate to 21 percent and cut taxes for wealthy Americans.

Under an agreement between the House of Representatives and the Senate, the corporate tax would be one percentage point higher than the 20 percent rate earlier proposed, but still far below the present headline rate of 35 percent, a deep tax reduction that corporations have sought for years.

As they finalized the biggest tax overhaul in 30 years, Republicans wavered for weeks on whether to slash the top income tax rate for the wealthy. But in the end, they agreed to cut it to 37 percent from 39.6 percent. This was despite criticism from Democrats that the Republican plan tilts toward the rich and corporations, offering little to the middle class.

"I think we've got a pretty good deal," Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch told reporters.

The emerging agreement would repeal the corporate alternative minimum tax, set up to ensure profitable companies pay some federal tax, and expand a proposed $10,000 cap for state and local property tax deductions to also include income tax, lawmakers and sources familiar with the negotiations said.

The agreement would also gut part of the Obamacare health law by repealing a federal fine on individuals who fail to obtain health insurance, while authorizing oil drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Both add-on measures were part of nailing down sufficient votes for passage.

Further details of the agreed legislation were not yet available. A final bill could be formally unveiled as early as Friday, with decisive votes coming next week.

Moving the corporate tax target rate to 21 percent from 20 percent gave tax writers enough revenue to make the tax cuts immediate, Republican Sen. Ron Johnson said.

In a White House speech, Trump said the Internal Revenue Service has advised that if he signs the bill into law before Christmas, the tax cuts would take effect in February.

"If Congress sends me a bill before Christmas, the IRS ... has just confirmed that Americans will see lower taxes and bigger paychecks beginning in February," he said.

The IRS had no immediate comment.

A Trump administration official said the IRS will have to readjust its paycheck tax withholding tables for employers and that new withholding levels would take effect in February.

Under the bill, tax returns being filed next year for 2017 would not be affected, but returns filed in 2019 for 2018 would.

Trump appeared in the White House with several middle-class families that he said would benefit from the tax bill.

The Joint Committee on Taxation and the Congressional Budget Office, both nonpartisan research units of Congress, have forecast that rich taxpayers and businesses would gain disproportionately from the debt-financed Republican proposals.

As drafted, the Republican plan was expected to add as much as $1.5 trillion to the $20-trillion national debt in 10 years. With that in view, Republicans have been urgently trying to finalize details without increasing its estimated impact on the federal deficit and the debt. REUTERS

Baby Boomers Benefitting From Knee Arthritis Tr

10-Minute Technology Guided FDA-Cleared Painless Medical Treatments.. Allows P

New York City - Nothing is more true. A life with constant pain is not a life worth living. And if you can't stay active and do all the things you love - like walking, playing golf, tennis, vacationing etc. It's not really a life at all.

...the Pain Is More Like A Prison

And for generations, knee arthritis has given good, hard working people a life sentence of pain and suffering. To make things worse, slick marketers only add to the pain by promising wonder cures. Late night television and your mail box are filled with "wonder arthritis cures" that make wild claims and sound too good to be true . . . ***Because They Are***

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It is easy to give up...

But while marketers were peddling "wonder cures," real doctors and researchers were hard at work trying to discover a real medical solution. Modern medicine eradicated small pox and polio. Through laser eye surgery, doctors can give almost blind people perfect 20/20 vision. The potential cures on the horizon with breakthroughs like stem cell and regenerative therapies are endless.

Solve The Riddle Of Arthritis Pain?

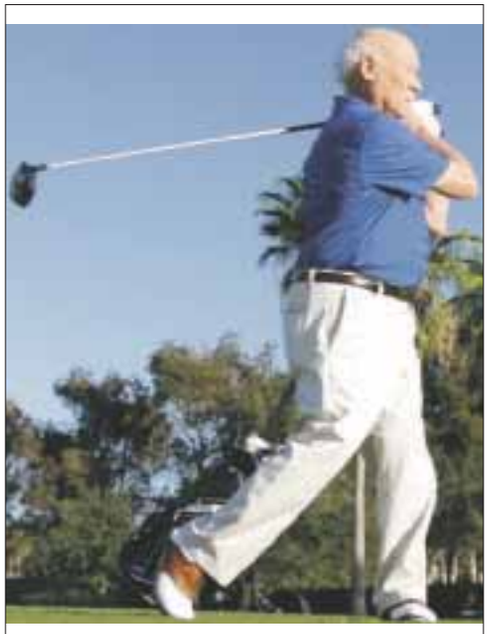
For the past 3 years, that's exactly what a medical clinic in New York City has been doing. The ***NYC Pain MD*** doctors have been able to help thousands of knee arthritis sufferers with cutting-edge treatments and technology older generations could only dream about. One of these treatments in particular has helped thousands of patents ease or eliminate pain and go back to doing their favorite activities like: walking, playing golf, tennis and many more. The treatment is called viscosupplementation. *But wait.* This is NOT the typical viscosupplementation. So if you are one of the many knee arthritis sufferers who already had viscosupplementation and did not get great results - what you are about to discover should be very important. to you in particular. It might even get you out of pain.

Here is why: During viscosupplementation, a special lubricating gel is put directly into your arthritic knee joint. This not only helps the knee joint to glide more smoothly, it acts as a cushion, protects the joint. and relieves a lot of pain. This is often referred to as "joint oil." In many cases, when done properly, this can dramatically lessen knee pain for up to 6 months and much longer in many cases.

And even better - if this treatment works for you the first time - it can be safely repeated when necessary and the results are often better for some.

Like Threading A Needle?

The key to this treatment being successful is actually getting the special lubricating gel directly into the joint where it can go to work. That's why the doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** use very advanced digital imaging that allows them to see directly into the joint and make sure the lubricating gel "hits the spot" and the treatment has the best odds for success. Studies show that doctors doing these types of procedures without this special imaging actually miss the joint space up to one third of the time!



"I've had trouble with my knee walking. I'm a golfer and want to play golf but I couldn't. I made the call and went and it's the best thing I ever did. It's just – now I can play golf, I can walk, I can climb stairs, I can do things I did many years ago".

"It's the smartest thing ever did" "Since I've been going for the treatment for my knees I don't' take any pills, I take not over the counter medication.."

"This a good alternative to surgery." "I am so glad I went. I'm so confident I feel so good about it and I recommend It to everybody." William La Spina . Golf Enthusiast

(While ***NYC Pain MD*** cannot say all patients will respond like this we can say they are possible. Every patient is individual and results will vary. patient to patient.)

Why Treatment Can Fail

This is why viscosupplmentation can fail for some people. It is also why many knee arthritis sufferers come to ***NYC Pain MD*** after failed treatments elsewhere... and are finally able to get relief. It is not uncommon for patients to travel hours for these advanced and precise treatment methods.

Patients Should Be Assured About Prescsion Treatments

If you have already had this procedure without this advanced imaging... Or if it was not used throughout the procedure, there is a good chance you did not get the maximum results you could have and should have.

What The Research Says About Results: Can We Slow Down Arthritis? A retrospective study of nearly 1000 cases of knee arthritis between 49 and 79 years old was done by an orthopedic surgeon in Lousiana. Patients with Grade 4 or "bone to bone" who presented for consideration of knee replacement were instead put on a program of image-guided gel injection procedures. Follow up almost 4 years later revealed that about 3 of 4 had done well and had not need surgery...regardless of age or even if overweight.

Another study was done by Pearl Diver research group who reviewed 198,000 files of those who underwent treatment with viscosupplementation . Two years later, 82% still had not required surgery (due to their postive results.)

Massive Potential Cost Savings For Patients, Insurance Carriers?

While surgery may be the best option for some.., for others, due to fear of surgical risk, medical ailments that may prohibit surgery or for those that are just seeking less invasive alternatives, the costs savings can be staggering. In a study published in the American Journal of Managed Care, a potential savings of $4706.00 per patient if treated with viscosupplementation was estimated . In a theoretical population of 100,000 (NYC is over 10 million) over a 3-yr. period, 808 knee replacements were projected to be avoided and up to $9,131,819 could potentially be saved by patients, medicare and insurance carriers. <u>This should be welcome news for rising health care costs.</u>

Who Can Benefit From This Treatment?

This treatment is not for everyone. But it is . especially if you have sensations of grinding or rubbing, pain on simple weight bearing. or

reatments Their Parents Could Only Dream About

Patients Go Home With Just A Band-Aid On The Knee... No Surgery - No Hospital

on bending your knees, if you are struggling getting up and down stairs (like subways), have pain on walking, feel tight and stiff after activities or in the morning or just cannot move like you used to. If this sounds like you then seeing one of the specially trained doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** could be what the best thing you could do for yourself . Bu do not wait this point as these arthritis can worsen with more time.

And this is very important - especially for those who have had viscosupplmentation in the past without good results. Many patients who did not have good results elsewhere are often able to get a favorable results because of the advanced imaging technology and procedure experience at ***NYC Pain MD.***

Even doctors themselves are often patients at NYC Pain MD.

How to Find Out If The Experts At *NYC Pain MD* Can Help You

If you have knee arthritis pain and would like to see if this treatment might help you - the experts at ***NYC Pain MD*** offer a complimentary screening appointment.

This screening will help determine if you are a candidate for treatment and also gives you a chance to get your questions answered.

If you are a candidate, you will leave knowing that you found the possible way to lessen or even eliminate your knee pain for 6 months or more for many patients.

There is no obligation and if you are not a candidate - the doctor will help you find the best doctors and treatments for your particular case and refer you to the proper sources. Set up a complimentary screening at **800-741-5340**

The *NYC Pain MD* 'X" Factor ?

NYC Pain MD is a high-tech medical facility equipped with all the necessary equipment to treat appropriate candidates right in it's own in-office procedure suites. What does this mean for you? It means no stressful hospital, no intimidating surgical center or out patient facility visits. This also means you don't have to be "Rich and Famous" because by avoiding all those "fancy" facilities you don't have to bear their severe costs which can often be several times the cost of the treatments themselves. Your experience is far more relaxing with personalized attention. The treatment is gentle and you'll go home with just a one-inch band aid on your knee ... and little to no downtime. Many go right to work after this with little to no stress after 10 minutes procedure.

The Secret To Knee Pain Relief? With precision advances in medical science and technology the caring doctors at ***NYC Pain MD*** have been able to help so many relieve their pain and get their active lifestyle back.

How To Get A No-Cost Screening & Find Out If This Knee Arthritis Treatment Is For You

The popularity of this treatment is startling. New Yorkers are lining up weekly to find out if the are candidates… patients looking for options other then surgery that really work. But because this is a real medical treatment - it is not for everyone. That's why the experts have setup an easy screening visit.. This screening will help determine if you are a candidate for additional examination and possible treatment. This screening is offered at no cost to the patient. All your questions answered and you will find out if this treatment is for you .Zero risk or obligation. Just call 800-741-5340 Tell them, "I would like the knee screening." They will take care of everything. Due to demand, spots are limited - call immediately to avoid unnecessary waiting. The number to call is : 800-741-5340

More Good News About Insurance: *Many insurances including Traditional Medicare (part B) help cover modest to significant portions of these care programs*

To set up a complimentary screening, just call **800-741-5340**. But if you want a screening, we recommend calling right now. Due to time limitations, the center can only offer a limited number of screening per month. They decided to limit the number because they believe in the giving every patient the individual time they deserve.

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New York City toy donations will go to Coalition for the Homeless at 129 Fulton St. ALL PHOTOS NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

Last chance to donate to Metro Magic in NYC

Metro's eighth annual holiday toy drive winds down this week. Visit metro.us/magic to donate.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
@metromorgan
morgan@metro.us

Friday is the deadline to order toys for Tony's Metro Magic.

The annual Metro toy drive provides holiday gifts to underprivileged children. Metro has already received piles of toys thanks to generous donations from our readers. But if you're still interested in donating, you can do so by visiting Metro.us/magic. From there, you'll be able to click on the link to our New York City wish list, which is hosted by Target.

Lilliana, 2, opens presents she received from Metro readers.

Toys are delivered to our Metro office in the Financial District. Staff members will hand off the toys to the Coalition for the Homeless early next week.

This year marks the 8th anniversary of the toy drive, which was renamed in memory of Tony Metcalf, Metro's longest-serving editor in chief. Mr. Metcalf oversaw the project for more than four years before passing away in 2013.

"I am proud to continue this project in honor of Tony, and I hope all our readers, suppliers and members of the Metro team will help to make this yet another great Metro Magic year," said Metro's CEO Yggers Mortensen.

Metro thanks readers in advance for remembering the little ones who will spend the holidays in shelters or who may not have presents to open. Even one small gift can transform their experience of the holiday season.

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Who Should Apply?

Individuals or households who meet the income and household size requirements listed in the table below may apply. Qualified applicants will be required to meet additional selection criteria. Applicants who live in New York City receive a general preference for apartments.

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  - Residents of **Bronx Community Board 3** (50%)
  - Municipal employees (5%)

AVAILABLE UNITS AND INCOME REQUIREMENTS

Unit Size	50% AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) UNITS	Monthly Rent[1]	Units Available		House-hold Size[2]	Annual Household Income[3] *Minimum – Maximum*[4]
1 bedroom		$718	2	→	1 person	$27,085 - $33,400
					2 people	$27,085 - $38,200
2 bedrooms		$872	7	→	2 people	$32,503 - $38,200
					3 people	$32,503 - $42,950
					4 people	$32,503 - $47,700
3 bedrooms		$1,004	3	→	3 people	$37,749 - $42,950
					4 people	$37,749 - $47,700
					5 people	$37,749 - $51,550
					6 people	$37,749 - $53,350

60% AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI) UNITS	Monthly Rent[1]	Units Available		House-hold Size[2]	Annual Household Income[3] *Minimum – Maximum*[4]
	$880	17	→	1 person	$32,640 - $40,080
				2 people	$32,640 - $45,840
	$1,066	29	→	2 people	$39,155 - $45,840
				3 people	$38,155 - $51,540
				4 people	$39,155 - $57,240
	$1,229	18	→	3 people	$45,463 - $51,540
				4 people	$45,463 - $57,240
				5 people	$45,463 - $61,860
				6 people	$45,463 - $66,420

[1] Tenant responsible for electric • [2] Household size includes everyone who will live with you, including parents and children. Subject to occupancy criteria.
[3] Household earnings includes salary, hourly wages, tips, Social Security, child support, and other income. Income guidelines subject to change.
[4] Minimum income listed may not apply to applicants with Section 8 or other qualifying rental subsidies. Asset limits also apply.

How Do You Apply?

Apply online or through mail. To apply online, please go to nyc.gov/housingconnect. To request an application **by mail, send a self-addressed envelope to: St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418.** Only send one application per development. Do not submit duplicate applications. Do not apply online and also send in a paper application. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than **February 15, 2018**. Late applications will not be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application?

After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility. Interviews are usually scheduled from 2 to 10 months after the application deadline. You will be asked to bring documents that verify your household size, identity of members of your household, and your household income.

Español

Presente una solicitud en línea en nyc.gov/housingconnect. Para recibir una traducción de español de este anuncio y la solicitud impresa, envíe un sobre con la dirección a: **St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418**. En el reverso del sobre, escriba en inglés la palabra "SPANISH." Las solicitudes se deben enviar en línea o con sello postal antes de **15 de febrero 2018.**

简体中文

访问 nyc.gov/housingconnect 在线申请。如要获取本广告及书面申请表的简体中文版，请将您的回邮信封寄送至：**St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418**信封背面请用英语注明"CHINESE"。必须在以下日期之前在线提 交申请或邮寄书面申请2018年2月15日。

Русский

Чтобы подать заявление через интернет, зайдите на сайт: nyc.gov/housingconnect. Для получения данного объявления и заявления на русском языке отправьте конверт с обратным адресом по адресу **St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418.** На задней стороне конверта напишите слово "RUSSIAN" на английском языке. Заявки должны быть поданы онлайн или отправлены по почте (согласно дате на почтовом штемпеле) не позднее **15 февраль 2018.**

한국어

nyc.gov/housingconnect 에서 온라인으로 신청하십시오. 이 광고문과 신청서에 대한 한국어 번역본을 받아보시려면 반송용 봉투를**St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418**으로 보내주십시오. 봉투 뒷면에 "KOREAN" 이라고 영어로 적어주십시오. 2018년2월15일까지 온라인 신청서를 제출하거나 소인이 찍힌 신청서를 보내야 합니다.

Kreyòl Ayisyien

Aplike sou entènèt sou sitwèb nyc.gov/housingconnect. Pou resevwa yon tradiksyon anons sa a nan lang Kreyòl Ayisyen ak aplikasyon an sou papye, voye anvlòp ki gen adrès pou retounen li nan: **St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418**. Nan dèyè anvlòp la, ekri mo "HATIAN CREOLE" an Anglè. Ou dwe remèt aplikasyon yo sou entènèt oswa ou dwe tenbre yo anvan dat **fevriye 15, 2018.**

العربية

تقدم بطلب عن طريق الإنترنت على الموقع الإلكتروني nyc.gov/housingconnect. للحصول على ترجمة باللغة العربية لهذا الإعلان ولنموذج الطلب الورقي، أرسل مظروف يحمل اسمك وعنوانك إلى: St. Augustine c/o The Wavecrest Management Team, 87-14 116th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418. على الجهة الخلفية للمظروف، اكتب باللغة الإنجليزية كلمة "ARABIC". يجب إرسال نماذج الطلبات عن طريق الإنترنت أو ختمها بختم البريد قبل15فبراير، 2018.

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MTA

Alabama black-voter turnout helped propel Doug Jones to his victory

As the polls closed Tuesday night many people took to Twitter to show the stunning turnout of African-American voters. GETTY IMAGES

Alabama black-voter turnout may have been the contributing factor that helped Democrat candidate Doug Jones defeat Republican candidate Roy Moore for the Alabama Senate.

On Tuesday, Alabama made history when it elected its first Democratic senator in 25 years. When Jones takes office, the Republican majority will become 51-49.

According to CNN exit-polling data, 30 percent of Alabama voters for this election were African-American with 96 percent of them voting for Doug Jones. As for African- American women, 98 percent of black woman voters gave Jones their vote. The New York Times reports the total amount of black voters for this election was higher than when Barack Obama was elected in 2008 and reelected in 2012.

Exit-poll statistics show 63 percent of white women voted for Roy Moore despite the fact he has been battling sexual assault allegations. Several women have come forward to say Moore sexually assaulted them when they were teenagers and he was in his 30s.

According to The New York Times, African-American voters came out to support Jones because they don't agree with Moore's politics. African-American voters decided to vote against a man who is embattled by sexual-assault allegations and has said insensitive things about African-Americans and is backed by President Trump.

Grassroots organizations such as local NAACP chapters contributed to African-American voter turnout by mobilizing voters in black communities and urging them to get out and vote. Voting-rights groups and other organizations made sure residents were registered properly and were not turned away from polls due to missing pieces of identification. LENYON WHITAKER

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A white-hat hacker is a computer hacker who uses his skills for ethical, constructive purposes instead of theft, destruction or exploitation. GETTY IMAGES

White-hat hackers: Who are they and what do they do?

Fast facts about a hot and lucrative job in the digital world.

MICHAEL MARTIN
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White-hat hackers recently popped into the news on Monday when attorneys for a private investigator from Louisiana named Jordan Hamlett used, as his defence, that he was acting as a "white-hat hacker" when he tried to use President Trump's Social Security information to gain access to his tax returns.

Hamlett claims he tried to access IRS servers six times "out of sheer curiosity" to check the security of the government office's website security. He also cited past instances in which he has helped other organizations by acting as a white-hat hacker on their behalf.

A white-hat hacker is a computer hacker who uses his skills for ethical, constructive purposes instead of theft, destruction or exploitation. Most often, they're computer-security specialists who are hired to break into computer systems to expose vulnerabilities in the systems and make them stronger. They find malicious (black hat) hackers' most likely ways in, before the hackers do.

According to an August 2017 report by CBS News, many white-hat hackers are located in India. One of the world's best white-hat hackers, Sandeep Singh, nicknamed "Geekboy," told CBS he had been hired by companies such as Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, Uber and AirBnb to break into their systems and help them patch weak spots. The companies pay handsomely for the help. "How much I make in one day, my friends make in one year," said Singh.

"Gray hat hackers" are specialists who alternate between doing white-hat and black hat tasks.

There are even white-hat-hacker conferences, such as HackerOne, held in Las Vegas, where white-hat hackers compete in penetrating the systems of cooperating companies for prizes.

White-hat hackers will likely be key to upgrading the vulnerable U.S. voting infrastructure. In October 2017, after reports that Russian hackers attempted to breach voting systems in 21 states during the 2016 election, the annual DefCon hosted a Voting Machine Hacking Village to inform the computer-security industry about vulnerabilities in voting systems and to get them involved in fixing them. White-hat hackers were set loose on five different voting machines to see how quickly they could be breached. They cracked into the first one in about 90 minutes. "This software just isn't up to modern standards. It's not even as strongly protected as a PC," said one security expert.

In late November, the UK's National Health Service announced it was hiring white-hat hackers to prevent another WannaCry, a widespread ransomware attack that crippled healthcare providers' systems. On Tuesday, the Singapore government invited white-hat hackers to break into its defense ministry's systems, offering bounties to hackers who were able to do so.

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POLITICS

Two Trump judicial nominations rebuffed by Senate

Two of President Donald Trump's judicial nominees will not be confirmed by the Republican-controlled Senate following criticism over controversial statements they made, a White House official said.

The official said Wednesday the two nominations "will not be moving forward."

One of the nominees, Brett Talley, selected for a district court position in Alabama, had already said he would withdraw.

The other, Jeff Mateer, nominated to serve as a district court judge in Texas, was already hanging by a thread although he had not officially withdrawn.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, a Republican who chairs the influential Senate committee that overseas judicial nominations, said Wednesday that he "doesn't anticipate that either nominee would be confirmed," a spokesman said.

Talley was reported by online magazine Slate as having posted online sympathetic comments about the early history of the Ku Klux Klan. He also failed to disclose that his wife works in the White House Counsel's office, which overseas judicial nominations.

Mateer has run into trouble over speeches he made in 2015. In one, he referred to transgender children as being part of "Satan's plans," CNN reported. REUTERS

According to researchers, being stubborn can help you live longer

Stubborn people live a lot longer, at least in Italy.

MEAGAN MORRIS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

Are you constantly scolded for being "too stubborn" in your beliefs?

Well, tell those naysayers to kick rocks, because your headstrong ways could help you live longer.

Researchers from the University of Rome La Sapienza and the University of California San Diego School of Medicine studied people living in the villages of Cilento in Southern Italy to find out their secrets to longevity. The area — nestled between mountains and the Mediterranean Sea — boasts a large population of people past the age of 90.

The key traits of these long-living Italians include: a strong work ethic, positivity, close ties with family and stubborn personalities.

"There have been a number of studies on very old adults, but they have mostly focused on genetics rather than their mental health or personalities," said Dr. Dilip V. Jeste, senior author of the study, senior associate dean for the Center of Healthy Aging and Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

"The group's love of their land is a common theme and gives them a purpose in life. Most of them are still working in their homes and on the land. They think, 'This is my life and I'm not going to give it up,'" added Anna Scelzo, first author of the study with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Chiavarese, Italy.

And they aren't afraid of speaking their minds.

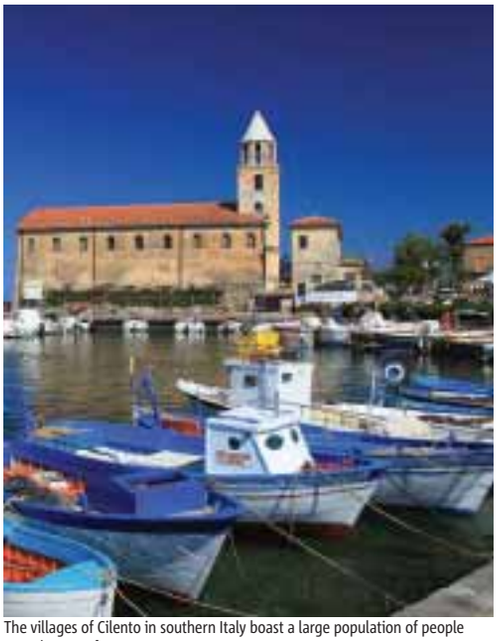
"We also found that this group tended to be domineering, stubborn and needed a sense of control, which can be a desirable trait as they are true to their convictions and care less about what others think," said Scelzo. "This tendency to control the environment suggests notable grit that is balanced by a need to adapt to changing circumstances."

Italians in general seem to live to an old age. Genetics do likely play a role, but many researchers believe their fresh diet and relaxed, stress-free lifestyle play a big part.

"Since the 1960s, there has been a big improvement in the Italian diet, with much more fresh fish and a wider variety of foods," Stefania Salmaso, director, National Centre for Epidemiology and Health Promotion in Rome told the BBC.

They do smoke more — 23 percent of adults, according to the British news network — but "fresh vegetables and fruit are commonly available and we use a lot of olive oil in cooking, and less animal fats than is found in British dishes."

So, it's clear: Stop stressing and start being opinionated — it'll help you live longer!



The villages of Cilento in southern Italy boast a large population of people over the age of 90. GETTY IMAGES

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Good for you, Kiki.
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

KiKi is having a baby!

Kirsten Dunst — beloved actress who played Marie Antoinette one time — is reportedly pregnant. Hooray!

Us Weekly reports that the 35-year-old actress is expecting her first child with fiancé Jesse Plemons, 29. The former "Fargo" co-star are also slated to tie the knot in Austin in the spring.The couple started dating in 2016, playing husband and wife on the FX hit series. News broke of their engagement, to everyone but this writer, in January 2017.

Dunst has been pretty chatty about having babies in the past, so this seems pretty standard. In June, she literally told Marie Claire UK that it was "time to have babies and chill." "I wasn't one of those 'I need a baby!' people until my goddaughter was born," she said. "I love her so much. That love is just like… you can't experience that unless you have a kid."

Well, Kiki, we're glad you will soon have a beautiful, screaming, pooping infant to call your own.

the word

Salma opens up about Weinstein

Salma Hayek is opening up about her own experience with disgraced Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. And it is yet another painful account that showcases more of Weinstein's unforgivable, bad dude behavior.

In an op-ed for The New York Times, the 51-year-old actress writes about her experiences refusing Weinstein's advances while working with him during production for Miramax's "Frida." And frankly, the things she had to say no to — taking a shower with him, letting him watch her shower, allowing him to give her oral sex — is rage-inducing.

Even worse, she recalls a time when, sick of her rejections, he threatened her, saying "I will kill you, don't think I can't."

Hayek hopes that by speaking out she can shed light on why people wait so long to do so. "Men sexually harassed because they could. Women are talking today because, in this new era, we finally can."

Amen, sister.

Scary, scary stuff.

Meghan Markle's royal Christmas

Do you have Meghan Markle and Prince Harry fatigue yet? Too bad! We're still invested. And here's even more reason to be: The 36-year-old recently engaged actress will be spending Christmas with her future in-laws. And that's apparently a big deal!

Markle will be the first royal fiancée to spend Christmas Day with the royal family, an exception to the traditional protocol. And it's all because Prince Harry, 33, is the queen's favorite.

It's a huge deal!

"If Harry asks for something, the queen would say yes as she adores him," a family friend tells People.

Doesn't hurt that Queen Elizabeth's corgis can't get enough of the former "Suits" actress. "The corgis took to her straight away," Prince Harry said during the couple's engagement interview.

"I've spent the last 33 years being barked at — this one walks in, absolutely nothing." OMG, they're very cute and boring and I love it.

Happy early Christmas to my new favorite couple — you guys deserve it.

John Stamos will soon be a father figure

Talk about a full house! Sorry, I was contractually obligated to do that. But really: John Stamos and his fiancée, Caitlin McHugh, are expecting their first child together.

Stamos, who will be a first-time father at the age of 54, and he gave a whole interview about it to People. And they, for whatever reason, put it on the cover.

Rebecca Romijn's ex-husband admits that he "always wanted to be a dad," but wasn't sure whether or not it was going to happen for him.

Yet another bundle of perpetually screaming joy.

But now, he's excited to be as insufferable a father as any. "I'll be a fun dad," he promises. "I've been practicing for a long time." Hey, man, hope you don't think "Full House" counts.

"I've done every schtick you can do with a baby on TV… all the bits and jokes and diaper gags. I'll probably just do all that stuff."

Oh good, because raising a real life child is really all about the diaper gags.

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Back behind the wheel

Comedian-driver Ben Bailey on what it's like to drive the Cash Cab, New York's most in-demand taxi.

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
eva.kis@metro.us

"Cash Cab," the only game show you play in a taxi, is back — but it was nearly someone besides comedian Ben Bailey at the wheel.

"I actually heard, like most people, through the news that they were bringing it back," says Bailey, who's won three Daytime Emmys for hosting "Cash Cab." "And then there was all this craziness about was I gonna be hosting or not, and people were pretty vocal on social media about it and I got the offer."

As if there's another stand-up comic who's also a licensed New York City cab driver! (Turns out there is someone, "just one, though I don't know if he's still a licensed cabbie.")

Drama aside, Bailey is happy to be back at the wheel five years after "Cash Cab" was canceled after its original run from 2005-2012. The show returned this month on the Discovery Channel, airing Sundays at 10 p.m.

New this season are celebrity guests like Matthew Perry, Brooke Shields and Dave Foley, who get in the cab to help passengers out (though not so much Gilbert Gottfried, apparently.) The reaction from contestants, Bailey says, has been everything from getting very nervous to "rolling with it even though they were very excited."

Guests can also go on Facebook Live to ask for help, rather than yelling out the window to answer questions worth up to $500 until they arrive at their destination — or make three bad guesses, at which point they're out of the cab.

The Morristown, New Jersey, resident has also kept busy with other hosting gigs, a podcast called "Tall But True" (he's 6 feet, 6 inches) and his stand-up, including the special "Ben Bailey Live and Uncensored."

In the time he's been away, he says New Yorkers have "mellowed a bit" but driving has gotten much harder. "I missed making the show," he says, "but I did not miss driving the taxi. You can't make left turns onto avenues a lot; there are more pedestrian walkways; there are so many new buildings and so many storefronts are turned over."

This is especially true in Lower Manhattan, where "Cash Cab" production company Lion Television is located. This is also the best tip for would-be contestants to get on the show, as it's where Bailey starts his day.

His other tip: Try to ride in a group. "The more brains you have working together, the better. A family will often do very well because the parents and kids know different areas."

But the prospect of a free ride with a cash reward at the end isn't enough for some. Bailey recalls "a handful of times" that people have either silently gotten out of the cab or declined to play.

"One woman said she was in the CIA," Bailey recalls. "Another guy said he was in the witness-protection program, and a few different times we got couples who weren't with the person they were supposed to be with."

When he's not driving the Cash Cab, Bailey gets around mostly via a car service, though he admits it takes "three times as long as the subway, which is still the best way to get around."

That's the kind of truth about New York life you don't get from a lot of shows. "Aside from 'Taxi Cab Confessions,'" says Bailey, "Cash Cab" is one of the most authentic representations of the city.

"That's part of what a lot of people say they love about the show — they get to experience New York again, almost like they get to go back."

Cash Cab airs Sundays at 10 p.m. on the Discovery Channel. PROVIDED

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Annette Bening talks about her latest film ... and working with Kevin Spacey

One star's still shining; the other is tarnished by sexual-harassment allegations.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
@MetroNewYork
gregory.wakeman@metro.us

Bening as Gloria Grahame in "Film Stars." SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Spacey and Bening, a mismatched couple in "American Beauty" DREAMWORKS

Nearly 20 years after sharing the big screen in Academy Award-winning "American Beauty," Annette Bening is eager to talk about her latest flick — "Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool" — but has been beleaguered with questions about her former co-star.

We're eager to see Oscar-bait "Film Stars," but as that film's director, Paul McGuigan, is known for showing scenes of physical and verbal abuse, we couldn't help but ask those questions ourselves, after learning of the serious accusations against Spacey.

So how did she feel upon learning the news?

"Shocked," says Bening. "I considered him a colleague. We had an extremely respectful, mutually respectful relationship. It is just very, very upsetting, everything that has happened in relation to him. I feel terrible about it."

Bening's remarks follow on from those of Allison Janney, who also starred opposite Spacey in "American Beauty," and who told Metro that she was left "devastated" by the news.

"I feel just devastated that this is Kevin's story now," she told us. "That this is what he was a part of. And that he abused his position as an actor. A lot of young kids would look up to him thinking he could do something for them. It's a really sad, and really terrible thing to abuse your power like that. It's incredibly disappointing."

We're not sure this is the last we'll hear about Spacey and his alleged abuses of power, but we're certain this isn't the last we'll hear about Bening's performance in "Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool," which will be out in limited release Dec. 29.

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The absolute *best* gifts for *plant lovers*

Being into plants is very in this year. And it's easy to see why: Not only are plants good for you, but they make your surroundings look good, too. Still, when it comes to keeping green things, well, green, some of us are better than others.

Here are nine perfect gifts for plant lovers — from the ones with Instagram-worthy, flourishing indoor gardens to the ones that kill everything they touch. No judgement! **RACHAEL VAUGHAN CLEMMONS**

THINGS BY HC

Crown print

This poster, by Instagram famous plant aficionado Hilton Carter, comes with a generous helping of street cred. Also it is very pretty.
$30, thingsbyhc.com

Cut-glass plant mister

Misting might be a mystery to you — but your plant loving friend with a humidity loving Birds Nest Fern will thank you for this vintage inspired glass mister.
$14, terrain.com

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Polished watering can

This chic, minimal watering can adds a little oomph to an indoor garden and screams, "I take my houseplants very seriously!"
$38, anthropologie.com

URBAN OUTFITTERS

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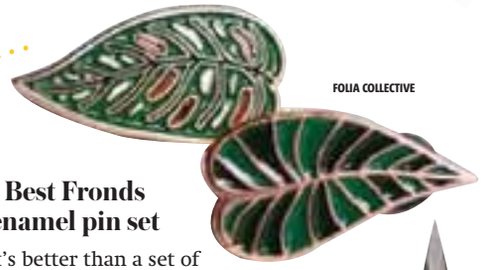
Have a friend who's always gone on the weekends? This very cool self-watering stake will keep plant baes in tip-top shape for up to three days.
$8, urbanoutffers.com



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Best Fronds enamel pin set

What's better than a set of BFF necklaces? A set of Best Fronds enamel pins — one for you, one for your favorite plant kween.
$18, foliacollective.com

NEED SUPPLY

Saikai garden scissors

First of all, these are beautiful. Second of all, they're great for delicate pruning — perfect for the pal with an herb garden.
$150, needsupply.com

POKETO

Eric Trine octahedron ring planter

Perfect for the design fiend in your life, this wire planter gives a regular old pot an instant upgrade.
$55, poketo.com

ZARA HOME

Green decorative cactus figure

Know someone who loves plants but can't keep them alive? This decorative figure looks good and doesn't require sunlight or water.
$50, zarahome.com

THE SILL

Neon pothos

The pothos is a low-maintenance, easy to care for plant that goes with everything. Plus, hello! It's neon and therefore impossible to resist.
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Winter *warmers*

Baby, it's cold outside. So stuff your stockings with something steamy. Now that the first snow's fallen — and the remainder of 2017 has left us with a severe foreboding of further freezing — take care of the rest of your shopping list by giving temperature-lifting goodies. **JOSHUA CROUTHAMEL**

66°North Polartec sweater

The locals of Iceland know their snow. So you can trust 66°North (named after the latitude); they've been producing extreme-weather gear for nearly 100 years. This lightweight — yet superwarm — top is quick-drying, and stylish enough to transition from a bottom layer on the slopes to a top layer at *après*. **$150 on 66North.com**

Thermos: The Rock

'Tis the season for spiked hot cocoa, steaming-hot ramen and mulled apple cider. But how to keep all those liquids bubbling (and contained) in your work bag? Trust the folks at the company that coined the name for its product. This Thermos holds 1.1 quarts, and its stainless-steel exterior is vacuum-insulated to keep your beverage warm for a full 24 hours. **$15 on Amazon.com**

Canada Goose Arctic down gloves

From the people responsible for all of those puffy jackets with the faux-fur hood lining you encounter when window shopping, Canada Goose has created a similar design for the digits. These down-filled gloves are as delightful to the touch as they are warm (and they're still machine washable). **$150 on CanadaGoose.com**

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Want to avoid finger freeze for a fraction of the cost? And find yourself with a flat phone at the same time? Look no further than this double-sided hand warmer that doubles as a portable power bank to recharge your cell. It has three temps (107°F, 118°F and 131°F ... if you find yourself snowshoeing north of the Arctic Circle) and heats up in three seconds. **$16 on Amazon.com**

Vans/The North Face DX sneaker

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Holiday tipping guide: who expects what?

Play Santa for the service providers in your life. ISTOCK

Feeling generous? Don't forget the people you rely on who may not necessarily be on your mailing list.

NerdWallet is a personal finance website.

Does holiday tipping make you tense? Join the club. Last year 11% of Americans admitted in a Consumer Reports survey that they dreaded handing out year-end gratuities.

But with a few simple guidelines and a slight shift in perspective, you can manage this situation with grace.

Think honestly about what you can afford

"Holiday tipping is really holiday thanking," says manners maven Daniel Post Senning, co-author of "Emily Post's Etiquette," 19th edition. "The principles of good etiquette are consideration, respect and honesty, and part of that honesty is honesty with yourself about what you can afford."

Which likely depends on how many people you plan to thank.

Start with those who help you care for yourself, your family and your home. That might include your barber or hairstylist, massage therapist, house cleaner, lawn and garden workers, babysitter and dog walker.

The amount you give each person should vary. As a general rule, tip an occasional service provider roughly the cost of one session. And aim to give each person who helps around your home or takes care of your family members about a week's pay. Simply allow for "about the same amount as you'd spend on these expenses in an average month," Senning says.

Cash is ideal for holiday gratuities, but prepaid gift cards also work. "It's a way to personalize it, if you know somebody likes a certain thing," Senning says. In the case of your mail carrier, though, steer clear of greenbacks; U.S. Postal Service regulations forbid employees from accepting cash tips and specify that gifts should cost no more than $20.

For the professionals in your life, non-monetary gifts are best. Giving your child's teacher a present instead of cash will help you avoid any perception of trying to curry favor. For the staff at Grandma's retirement home, a group gift — such as a sharable basket of sweet treats — is more appropriate.

If you can't swing cash, bake cookies

If money's tighter than usual, or you didn't include these tips in your holiday budget, don't fret. A batch of homebaked cookies or another heartfelt present can be perfectly nice. Whatever you give, "a handwritten note is really important," Senning says. "Part of any good tip is a genuine expression of thanks.

"But don't underestimate the meaningfulness of that crisp $50 in the envelope." CAREN WEINER CAMPBELL

Here's a breakdown:

- **Babysitter:** One evening's pay plus a gift from the kid(s)
- **Barber:** Cost of one visit or a gift of equal value
- **Day care worker:** $25-$70 each, plus a small gift from the kid(s)
- **Dog walker:** Cash gift equal to one day (or one week) of service
- **Doorman:** $20-$100 each (all should receive the same amount)
- **Hairstylist:** Cost of one session or a gift of equal value
- **Housekeeper/cleaner:** At least one week's pay
- **Massage therapist:** Cost of one session or a gift of equal value
- **Nanny:** At least one week's pay plus a gift from the kid(s)
- **Personal trainer:** Cost of one session or a gift of equal value
- **Pet groomer:** Cash gift equal to the cost of one session
- **Postal worker:** Small gift or gift card worth less than $20
- **Yard/garden workers:** $20-$50 each

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For the *'Star Wars'* fans

Bring the galaxy far, far away into your home with these gifts.

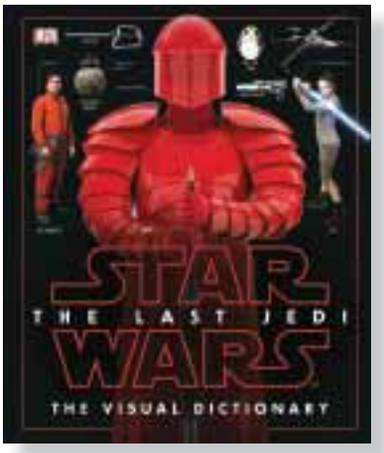
ASOS x "Star Wars" galaxy dress

Those who prefer casual cosplay will love Asos' collaboration with Disney featuring pieces like this Rey-inspired galaxy-printed dress with long front slits and metallic details. ***$95, asos.com***

EVA KIS

Propel Star Wars TIE Advanced X1 Quadcopter

Looking for some starship vs. starship action that's more realistic than a video game? These durable drones look just like a TIE fighter, X-wing or speeder bike, capable of laser combat with a worldwide leaderboard and stunts like barrel rolls. ***$129.99, bhphotovideo.com***



"The Last Jedi" Visual Dictionary

Want to really go deeper into the latest "Star Wars" film? DK Publishing's Visual Dictionaries are a treasure trove of insights into the secrets of movie magic, how characters shape their costumes and tons more. ***$22.99, dk.com***

Forces of Destiny girls' T-shirt

Now that "Star Wars" is a Disney property, we're getting tons more kids merchandise. Target's entire line of "Star Wars" clothes for girls is darling, especially the ones celebrating the franchise's growing ranks of female characters. ***$9.99, target.com***

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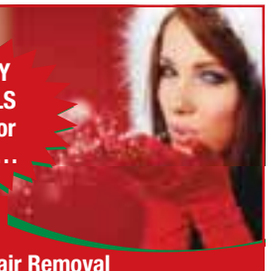

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Live in the retro-future with this lamp using the same cutting-edge '80s technology as the Rebel Alliance's 8-bit hologram table. ***$49.55, amazon.com***

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www.craftsports.us

8 Host gifts that will make you the *best guest*

You, very important reader, surely have a whole bundle of holiday parties to attend. While bringing booze is pretty standard for any well-socialized guest, why not add in a little something extra this season? Here are eight ideas for thoughtful, outside-the-box gifts that will impress any host — and are sure to get you invited back. **KATE MOONEY**

Christmas cactus

This festive plant with Christmas-red blossoms will give life to any holiday party. Plus, it will be a bright spot amid the host's morning-after party clean-up.
$3.98, Lowes.com.

Williams-Sonoma hot chocolate

This 12-ounce tin of "double dark" hot chocolate will make any host feel cozy and joyful.
$15.95, Williams-sonoma.com

Five-flavor bitters bar set

Set your host up for a 2018 filled with more flavorful concoctions, with this selection of five 1.7-ounce bottles of flavored bitters (smoked chili, aromatic, citrus, orange, ginger). ***$34.95, hellacocktail.com***

Zum lavender-lemon mist

An easy, good-smelling essential-oil blend can be used as a body or face mister, air freshener or linen spray. This 4-ounch Zum lavender-lemon mist will do the trick.
$9.95, target.com

Rose glass tumbler

Vintage rose-colored tumblers add a little class to any beverage.
$16, comingsoonnewyork.com

A dozen blooming tea roses

What's better than a bouquet of roses? Why, a bouquet of blooming tea roses. When each bundle of dried tea leaves steeps in hot water, it blooms into an edible flower. Post-magic trick, it's a warm bev for your host to enjoy any blustery winter day.
$21.95, Amazon.com.

Old Hollywood Round Circles Coasters

This four pack of throwback ceramic coasters will jazz up any coffee table.
$21.99, Wayfair.com

P.F. Candle Co, No. 5: spruce

Who doesn't love a fresh spruce-scented candle over the holidays? This hand-poured soy candle comes in an amber jar that— BONUS – you can re-use once the candle burns out.
$17, pfcandleco.com

Buy your friends *classes* instead of gifts

Sometimes you want to give the gift of an experience instead of something tangible. You probably know someone who's always wanted to learn how to make dumplings or cross flying trapeze off her bucket list. But they've probably never considered paying to indulge their whimsy. Help your friends get excited about learning something new with one of these affordable workshops in NYC. **KATE MOONEY**

INSTAGRAM.COM/THEBKLYNKITCHEN

Learn to cook at Brooklyn Kitchen

There are all kinds of culinary tricks to pick up at this Brooklyn-based cooking school, with classes on the art of butchering ($150), dumpling-making ($95), knife skills ($100) and more. Any would make quite the holiday treat for the least irritating foodie you know. **Dates and prices vary, Brooklynkitchen.com**

Learn macrame at Brooklyn Craft Company

Give the plant bitch or bro in your life the gift of learning to knit macrame plant hangers for their beloved green babies. Perhaps a thank you, they'll at least invite you over to hang out among their newly-hanging shrubs. **Sat., Jan. 6, 3 p.m.-5:30 p.m., $55, brooklyncraftcompany.com.**

INSTAGRAM.COM/BROOKLYNCRAFTCOMPANY

ISTOCK

Learn to take better pictures at Brooklyn Central

For your Instagram-savvy pals who might want to challenge themselves beyond staging thirst traps and picking the best filters, this Dumbo photography studio offers crash courses that will help them hone their skills with their iPhone, learn the basics of using a digital camera, and beyond. **$75 and up, dates vary, wearebkc.com**

Learn flying trapeze at Trapeze School New York

Here's something to cross off the bucket list. Help your favorite adrenaline junkie conquer this circus feat with a session at the Trapeze School New York, located in Williamsburg. There are also classes in aerial silk, acrobatics and trampoline. **$55, dates vary, newyork.trapezeschool.com**

INSTAGRAM.COM/TSNYNEWYORK

ISTOCK

Learn to make your own bath bombs at NY Institute of Aromatherapy

It's bath season, bitches. These days, bath bombs are the go-to suds-making technology. What if you could make your own? This one-session bath bomb workshop at the New York Institute of Aromatherapy is perfect for a friend who's as keen on chemistry as she is on mastering the art of self-care. **Thursday, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., $65, nyioa.com.**

Can you Beat the Bomb?

These people did not Beat the Bomb, but that's just fine! PROVIDED

things to do

Each room has a different challenge that gets harder every time you complete it. ANDREW RAUNER, @ AJRPHOTOS

PROVIDED

Brooklyn's newest team-building exercise is all about collaboration — or else.

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
eva.kis@metro.us

If you combine the Color Run, an escape room, laser tag and Nickelodeon's Double Dare, you might get an idea of what Beat the Bomb is.

Or, as founder Alex Patterson puts it, "How can you create a perfect team-building moment? Stand people in front of something that would explode, but in a fun way. It's blasting people with a paint bomb. On Thanksgiving, I blasted my family!"

At the new teamwork experience now open in DUMBO, groups of up to six have 10 minutes in each of four rooms to complete challenges leading up to a "bomb" in the final room, which they have to "defuse" to keep from getting blasted with paint. Completing each challenge successfully adds more time to the bomb.

"Every escape room, all their puzzles really have you in your own head," he says. "At Beat the Bomb, everyone is focused on the same thing. It's not about [a solution] that will be in any one's person brain, it's something you all have to do at once — every game is meant to be focused on the interactions of the players."

Patterson knows a thing or a dozen about creating what he calls "the ultimate hour of teamwork" after spending five years designing obstacles for Tough Mudder, the extreme race where participants must work together to clear obstacles.

Beat the Bomb's games won't get you dirty (until the end), but they will test your problem-solving skills: think forming patterns with your bodies on a laser grid and replicating a sequence of sounds.

"You can't really figure it out or not," Patterson says. "The challenge is, 'How many times can you do it in 10 minutes?'"

Because the games rely on sharing information and cooperation rather than trivia knowledge and logic puzzles, they're good for anyone age 10 and up. The difficulty lies in the sequences getting longer and getting fewer hints to solve them.

"A school group will do 10 patterns and have fun," he explains, "while a group of investment bankers who want to be super competitive will do 30 patterns, so they'll get to the places where the game is really hard."

Each successful attempt rewards 5 seconds on the bomb clock — and a new level of difficulty to keep players challenged. "You hear a lot of cursing," he says. "You can time it, right when that next level loads, people go, 'You motherf—ers.'"

Players suit up in head-to-toe biohazard gear, and get a face shield before the final room. To be clear, this isn't paintball — you won't be left with welts, and Patterson has made the game accessible to anyone age 10 and up.

"People come in all shapes and sizes," he says. "For example, the laser maze is not all crazy angles that you need to squeeze through."

Patterson, a former tax lawyer who joined

Tough Mudder after the 2008 financial crisis and picked up some game-making tips at NYU's Integrated Telecommunications Program, and his team have been tweaking Beat the Bomb since last winter in a single room in Bushwick.

Though the game has only been running for a few weeks, they're already building a second set of rooms to allow teams to compete against each other directly.

"It's [part of] a trend these days of people wanting to take a break from Facebook and Netflix," he says. "To put down their phones and actually be present with their friends (or colleagues) doing something totally unique and memorable."

Beat the Bomb is now open at 247 Water St., Suite 106 in Brooklyn, from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Tickets are $49 per person.

YOUR WEEKEND STARTS NOW

COMEDY

The Dating Show

A fledgling couple is invited to go on their first date in front of a live audience as comedians improvise a scene around them. It could be the best night of your life, too, whether cupid strikes or two real humans awkwardly fall apart in front of your eyes.
Dec. 14, 8 p.m., The PIT Loft, 154 W. 29th St., $7, thepit-nyc.com

SHOPPING

Very Merry Holiday Hours

Cram in some extra holiday shopping with bonus hours and special deals from some of your favorite (or soon-to-be-favorite) shops in the Meatpacking District. On Thursday, over 35 retailers will have their doors open late, sharing a festive shopping atmosphere with cocktails, light bites and extras like free massages at Exhale Spa and ornament-making at Doyle & Doyle. Plus, you can take home prizes by showing your receipts from other shops at Little West Wines.
Dec. 14, 6-9 p.m., free, meatpacking-district.com

CONTEST

PROVIDED

Bierhaus NYC Ugly Sweater Contest

Your ugly sweater could score you some points — if you manage to impress Santa, who'll be judging the Ugly Sweater Contest at Bierhaus NYC. After three winners are awarded their prizes, Santa will serve all participants a free beer from a freshly tapped keg. In addition to beer, they'll be serving hot apple cider and mulled wine, with specials on "shot skis" that let you knock one back with your three most coordinated friends.
Dec. 16, 9-11 p.m., Bierhaus NYC, 712 Third Ave., free, bierhausnyc.com

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

December Babies Birthday Party

December babies got a bum deal, with birthdays falling when there seems to be no room for celebrating anything but end-of-year holidays. But The Skint loves you, kiddos, and it's throwing you a birthday party at Littlefield with much booze, balloon animals, a magic show, cake, live music by DJ Donwill, loot bags and more surprises. December babies get in free (with ID); those who love them are just $5.
Dec. 15, 10:30 p.m., Littlefield, 635 Sackett St., Brooklyn, free-$5, ticketfly.com

HOLIDAYS

The Xmas Pop Sing-Along

Are you the one who starts playing carols nonstop at Thanksgiving? Do you have a favorite cover of White Christmas? Then you're in for a treat at Union Hall's group karaoke event this Friday. The lineup will feature hits from pop stars ranging from David Bowie to Jack Skellington, Mariah Carey to the Grinch. You'll enjoy free milk and cookies, themed cocktails (which might make the lyrics more handy than you expect), a contest for best outfit and pictures with Santa.
Dec. 15, 9:30 p.m., Union Hall, 702 Union St., Brooklyn, $10, unionhallny.com

It's a Wonderful Life

This year, take your family to one of the city's most majestic cinemas for your annual viewing of "It's a Wonderful Life." The United Palace Open House begins with crafts, snacks, live music and photos with Santa, followed by a student showcase from the Dance Project of Washington Heights. There's a pre-show talk with the daughter of Donna Reed, then the movie begins at 3:30. It's free if you attend the day's interfaith service at the United Palace House of Inspiration.
Dec. 17, Noon, United Palace, 4140 Broadway, Free-$15, unitedpalace.org

BRUNCH

Jingle Bell Rock-ing Brunch

You can warm up for the holidays with traditional pastimes, or slip into your sexy Santa outfit and celebrate with the Jingle Bell Rock-ing Brunch at 5th & Mad. Brunchers are invited to dress in their Mean Girls best and play along with movie-themed games (like winning a free shot if you're the first to shout, "Fetch!" on cue, or running for Spring Fling King and Queen). Enjoy an hour of unlimited prosecco at noon or buy custom cocktails like the Glen Coco.
Dec. 16, Noon-5 p.m., 5th & Mad, 7 E. 36th St., $30, 5thandmad.com

HARRY POTTER

Harry and the Potters Yule Ball

Leave the Muggle world behind for one magical, musical night when you attend the Harry and the Potters Yule Ball. Celebrate everything you shamelessly love about the series, featuring some of the best-known bands inspired by the books. In addition to Harry and the Potters, there will be performances by Draco and the Malfoys, the Moaning Myrtles, the Potter Puppet Pals and Kwikspell. Your ticket supports activism fund the Harry Potter Alliance.
Dec. 16, 5:30-9:30 p.m., The Bell House, 149 Seventh St., Brooklyn, $20, thebellhouseny.com

T. MICHELLE MURPHY

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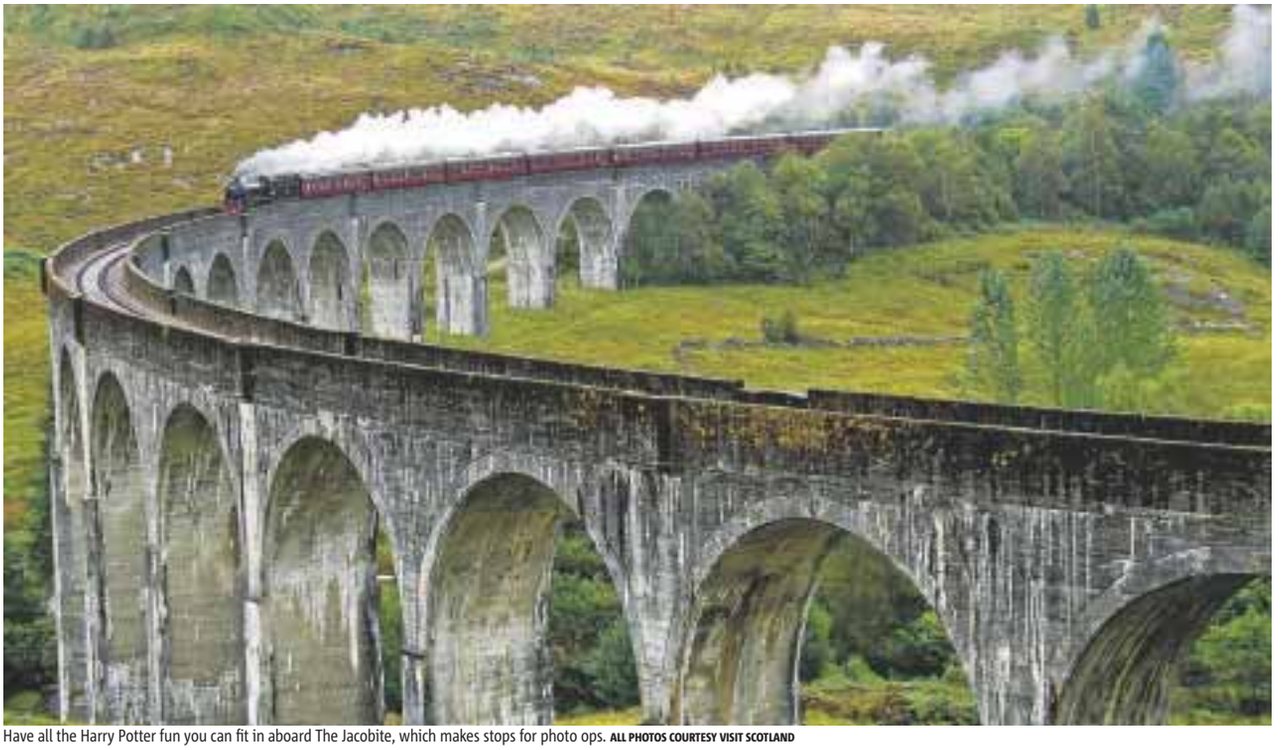
Another kind of island adventure

Scotland's many cultural and historic charms await — here's our guide to the best things to do.

Fodor's Travel



Have all the Harry Potter fun you can fit in aboard The Jacobite, which makes stops for photo ops. ALL PHOTOS COURTESY VISIT SCOTLAND

See the Northern Lights
You can potentially see the Northern Lights from almost anywhere in Scotland given the right conditions of a cloudless sky and little light pollution. But your best bets are in the northern isles of Shetland and Orkney, where they are known by the charming name "Merry Dancers."

In the far south of the country, the 373-square-mile Galloway Forest Park is a designated dark sky park and home to the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory, where you can marvel at the wonders of the night sky through powerful telescopes.

Go bar hopping in Edinburgh
Edinburgh's compact size and easy walkability makes it a great city for barflies. Luckily, the quality of its watering holes more than surpasses what you might expect for its size. Discerning tipplers should head for Bramble, which often makes an appearance on Drinks International's World's 50 Best Bars List, as well as its sister bars The Last Word and Lucky Liquor Co.

Whiskey drinker? Try Usquabae, The Devil's Advocate or Bow Bar. If it's just a few glasses of good wine you're after, head for the classy Bon Vivant.

Celebrate New Year's twice
New Year's Eve, or "Hogmanay" as it is known in local parlance, is Edinburgh's biggest night of the year. In fact, Edinburgh's Hogmanay party is one of the world's biggest New Year celebrations, with four days of festivities — including concerts, street parties, and a fire procession — beginning Dec. 28 and culminating in the "Loony Dook," (a costumed dip in the freezing waters of the Firth of Forth) on Jan. 1, followed by a much-needed holiday on Jan. 2.

If four days of New Year celebrations are not quite enough for you, head north to the Shetland island of Foula to do it all again, albeit on a significantly smaller scale. The island still adheres to the Julian calendar and celebrates New Year ("Newerday") on Jan. 13.

See a graffiti-covered castle
Just south of Largs, the 13th-century Kelburn Castle is distinctly different from the many other castles you'll likely come across on your trip through Scotland. Seat of the Earl of Glasgow, the castle's concrete facing was in need of replacing a decade ago and so, at the suggestion of his children, the Earl invited four Brazilian street artists—Nunca, Nina Pandolfo, and the twin duo Os Gêmeos—to paint its walls. The result is a vibrant façade decorated with abstract characters and bright colors.

Catch a fire festival
Scotland gets pretty chilly in the winter but you can warm up while experiencing a few, occasionally bizarre, traditions at its many fire festivals. On Hogmanay, revelers march through the streets of Stonehaven on the northeast coast, swinging 16-pound balls of fire, while, at the Comrie Flambeaux in the southern Highlands, long birch poles are set on fire and paraded through the streets.

Perhaps Scotland's most famous fire festival, Shetland's Up Helly-Aa takes place throughout the islands in the last week of January and sees a giant Viking ship set on fire to mark the end of winter. In late April, body-painted dancers frolic among flames atop Edinburgh's Calton Hill at Beltane, a pagan celebration of the approach of summer.

Raise a glass of scotch or, increasingly, gin!

Go whiskey tasting and gin tasting
Few would visit Scotland without sampling some of the country's most famous export. You can visit whisky distilleries up and down the country — throughout the five whisky-producing regions of Campbeltown, Highland, Islay, Lowland, and Speyside — but Islay has the attraction of eight active distilleries all on one island.

You might come for the whiskey, but you'll be just as likely to find locals sipping a gin and tonic as a Scotch nowadays. Scotland's gin scene is booming, with dozens of new distilleries — from Shetland in the north to North Berwick in the south — opening up over the past few years.

See Culloden Battlefield
The final Jacobite uprising, in which "Bonnie Prince" Charles Edward Stuart attempted to reclaim the British throne, was decisively and brutally crushed in 1746 at Culloden in the Highlands. It was the last battle fought on British soil. Those with an interest in this bleak and bloody period in Scottish history, which led to the decimation of Gaelic culture as the British monarchy methodically and cruelly worked to tame and empty the Highlands, can walk the battlefield and explore a collection of artifacts.

Take the "Harry Potter Train"
You can ride the real-life Hogwarts Express over the 21-arch Glenfinnan Viaduct in the Highlands by booking a journey on The Jacobite. This vintage steam train travels a scenic 41 miles from Fort William to Mallaig with stops for photo opportunities of surrounding lochs and mountains, as well as the Glenfinnan Monument, a memorial to the Jacobite uprising.

Visit the haunting valley of Glen Coe
Surrounded by mountains, the ancient pass through the valley of Glen Coe is imbued with history and tragedy—it was here in 1692 that 38 members of the MacDonald clan were treacherously murdered by their own guests. Nevertheless, the valley today is more closely associated with its opportunities for hiking and mountain climbing, the nearby ski center, and its appearance in several movies, most memorably the James Bond film "Skyfall."

Drink at Britain's most remote pub
If you fancy a drink at The Old Forge on the Knoydart peninsula, on the northwest coast, you'll need to plan accordingly. The only way to reach Britain's most remote pub is by a boat from Mallaig or an 18-mile hike. You'll likely be glad you made the trip, though, when you settle into a cozy chair to enjoy freshly caught seafood, real ales, whiskies, and live music.

Visit Iona Abbey or go on a retreat on Holy Isle
If, at the end of a trip full of journeying, boozing, and exploring, you are in need of some reflective time, the island of Iona, in the Inner Hebrides, is a site of great spiritual significance and a tranquil spot to spend a day or two. Named (in Gaelic) for Saint Columba, the island was the birthplace of Christianity in Scotland and still a site of pilgrimage today. The medieval Iona Abbey holds daily services and its grounds are the burial place of 48 kings of Scotland, including Macbeth.

Little Holy Isle, in the Firth of Clyde, has a similarly distinguished history as a sacred site. Today, it is owned by the Samyé Ling Buddhist community who run regular retreats.

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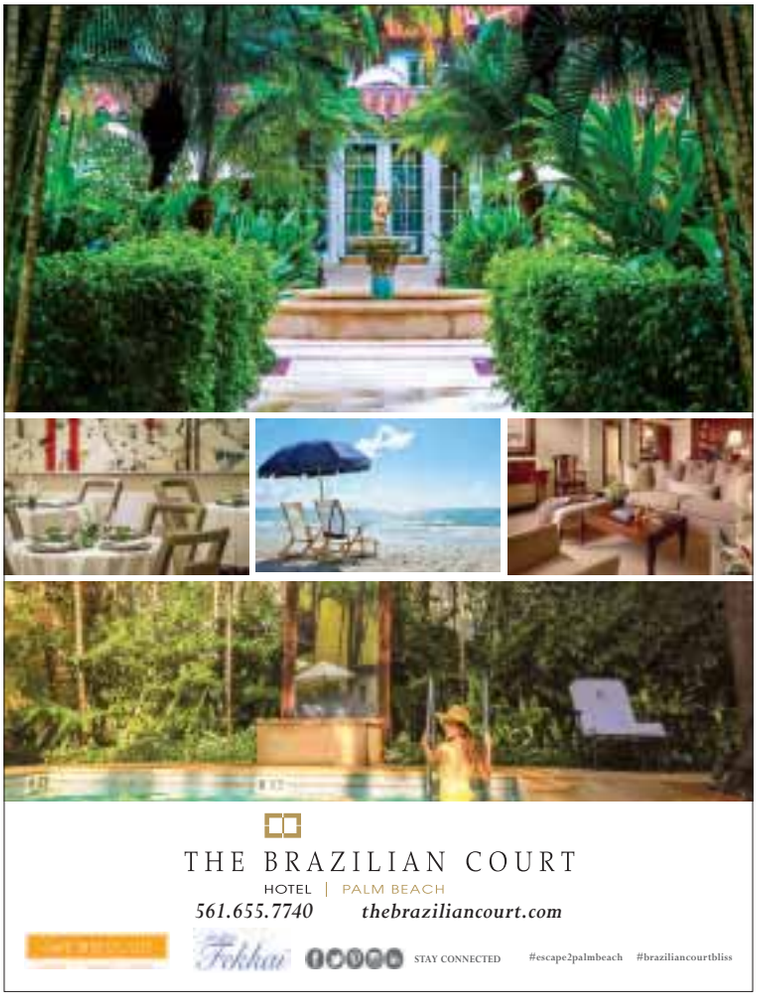

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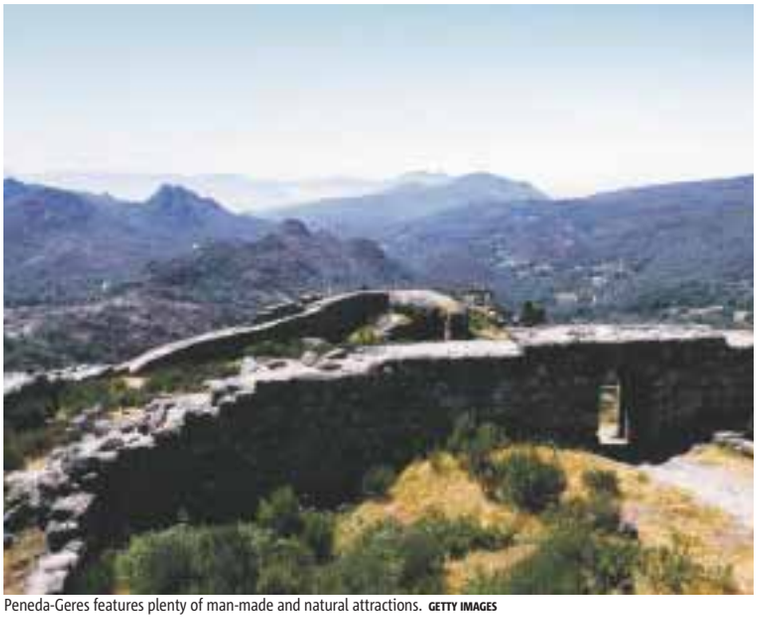
A wild ride back in time



Peneda-Geres features plenty of man-made and natural attractions. GETTY IMAGES

Portugal's Peneda-Geres National Park is an underexplored destination unique in every way.

Fodor's Travel

Most visitors to Portugal make a beeline for the beaches or head straight to the hipped up cities of Lisbon and Porto. But while this pocket-sized country on the Iberian peninsula seems to be on every traveler's European must-go list right now, one of its most astonishing attractions remains refreshingly under-the-radar.

Forget the golden sands and blue skies of the Algarve, the Alentejo, or the Lisbon Coast — at Parque Nacional Peneda-Gerês, the terrain is rocky, rugged and mountainous. The biodiversity is incredible, with close to 250 types of vertebrate joining endemic species such as the gold-striped salamander and endangered Iberian wolf in making this deeply forested region their home.

The park is rich in historical and cultural heritage, from megalithic necropolis and traces of Romanization, to castles, granaries, ovens, mills, dams and mountain villages, much of it well-preserved.

Adventurous travelers will find endless opportunity for high-adrenaline pursuits such as canyoning and caving, while hikers and runners can take trails that cut through crashing waterfalls and cooling natural pools, and wildlife lovers can marvel at the rugged grey mountains rising from green, green landscapes sprinkled with colorful wildflowers such as the Gerês lily, a blue-violet flower endemic to the park.

Golden eagles soar through skies that may be a scorchingly clear blue in summer, or a seething mass of grey clouds from October through May (all that exuberant vegetation is the result of regular thunderous downpours).

While visitors are unlikely to have any up-close-and-personal encounters with the wolves that roam the park, they are almost certain to encounter long-horned cattle wandering through the street, and catch a glimpse of garrano ponies–small wild horses that have free run of the land.

Ancient churches and other religious buildings dot the landscape, while the dramatic medieval bridge over the sparkling river Rabagão is said to have been built by the Devil himself (it's commonly known as Ponto de Diablo) to help a bandit escape his pursuers.

Accommodation options at the park range from several well-equipped campsites, a youth hostel, and village inn to a relatively plush spa hotel on the edge of the park at Vieira do Minho. Many tour operators run trips here, and it can be visited as a side trip from Porto or Braga.

Here is why Yankees won't trade for Orioles' star Manny Machado

While New York has expressed interest in the stud third baseman, the chances are slim that it could acquire such a talent.

JOE PANTORNO
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joseph.pantorno@metro.us

With Giancarlo Stanton having found a new home, Baltimore Orioles third baseman Manny Machado has suddenly become the crown jewel of the 2017 MLB Winter Meetings after his name was floated out on the trade market.

Stanton's new team, the New York Yankees, have expressed interest in acquiring the 25-year-old over the last few days.

Of course, they have.

The Yankees have made the most noise this offseason and general manager Brian Cashman is having the winter of his life as he found a way to deal for Stanton while keeping his top prospects from the Miami Marlins.

Somehow acquiring Machado would not only put the cherry on top of Cashman's masterful offseason, but it could possibly create the most imposing lineup Major League Baseball has ever seen.

That's not an over-exaggeration either.

While the thought of the three-time All-Star in pinstripes will make any Yankees fan giddy like a schoolchild, there are a series of circumstances that are going to make a trade for Machado extremely unlikely.

Sorry to rain on your parade:

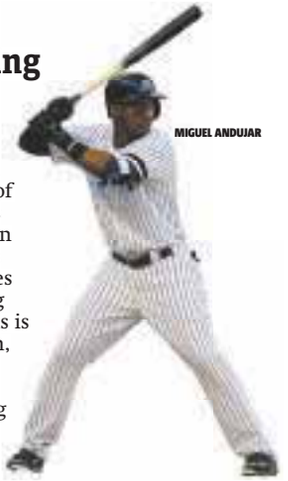
Manny Machado would make the Yankees the clear World Series favorite, but a trade bringing him to New York could be doubtful despite interest. GETTY IMAGES

1 Free agency

Machado is under team control until the end of the 2018 season as he'll have to go through a third year of arbitration this winter. Unless it was all but guaranteed that he would re-sign with the Yankees once he becomes an unrestricted free agent, Cashman and company would obviously be extremely wary of sending away any sort of significant talent for something that could be a one-year rental.

MANNY MACHADO

2 The asking price



MIGUEL ANDUJAR

While this is a team that is still capable of flashing the cash, as they did by taking on the rest of Stanton's contract, the Yankees have made its young talent a priority. This is nothing new though, seeing as the young talent they held on to is now flourishing at the major-league level in the form of Aaron Judge and Gary Sanchez.

With more top prospects poised to make the big club in 2018 in the likes of infielders Gleyber Torres and Miguel Andujar, the Orioles would likely pursue at least one of those names in exchange for Machado. Baltimore's farm system is rated among the worst in the majors, with just two prospects rated in the league's top 100. Neither of them is within the top 40. Giving up either Torres or Andujar is quite a large price for one year of control.

GLEYBER TORRES

3 The future contract

Even if the Yankees somehow find a way to snag Machado from the Orioles — and let's not get into specifics of whether it involves a top prospect or not — the prospect of re-signing him is quite an imposing feat. This is a player that is not even entering the prime of his career, has averaged 35 home runs and 92 RBI over the last three seasons, won a pair of Gold Glove Awards and has finished in the top 10 of the American League MVP voting three times.

When he hits free agency, his contract could be nearing or even top Stanton status, which would be over or near the $325 million mark.

Even his last season under team control in 2018 could see him make around $20 million depending on his arbitration hearing. After Stanton's acquisition, the Yankees have around $22 million to spend before hitting their luxury tax threshold of $197 million. For a team that is also in the market for an upgrade at starting pitching, it just can't happen.

GIANCARLO STANTON

4 These teams don't do business

Put the numbers and the prospects aside for a moment and just ask yourself, why would the Orioles actually want to deal their best player to a division rival? It's bad enough they have to face the harsh reality of losing their star, but to deliver him to the American League East favorites and let him rip you apart for possibly the foreseeable future while you wallow in third or fourth every year? That's madness.

Over the past 25 years, the Yankees and Orioles have completed just six transactions with no formidable talent actually swapping hands. Unless you consider either Steve Pearce or Jaret Wright big-time names.

Spags, Pederson look ahead to G-Men, Eagles Week 14 meeting

A hobbled Eagles team heads to MetLife Stadium to take on a disappointing Giants squad playing out its last few games this season.

KRISTIAN DYER
@KristianRDyer
sports@metro.us

The Giants take on the NFC East leaders on Sunday afternoon. GETTY IMAGES

It hasn't been an easy year for the Philadelphia Eagles in terms of injuries, and now head coach Doug Pederson's team faces another big obstacle with the loss of Carson Wentz for the year.

Wentz won't see out the end of his second season in the NFL, the Eagles quarterback tearing his ACL on Sunday in a win at the Los Angeles Rams. In his stead is Nick Foles, the Eagles backup quarterback who has plenty of experience as a starter and someone who certainly can play at a starting level in the NFL.

Now the challenge for the Giants is preparing for a different quarterback than Wentz, who started in Week 3 in what was an Eagles dramatic home win. Losing Wentz, arguably the best quarterback in the league this year, certainly hurts a team that has already clinched the NFC East.

Of course, coping with injuries to prominent players have been a theme around Philadelphia this year.

"Yeah, you know, it's tough. Thing is — we've sort of been dealt this hand all season. You lose Jason Peters, Darren Sproles, Jordan Hicks, Chris Maragos. You lose guys like that to IR for the year. Caleb Sturgis, our kicker, early on in the season and the biggest thing is obviously your quarterback and the one that touches the ball all the time, but I was here on staff when we drafted Nick Foles and he played a little bit then and, of course, since then he's played a lot of football and I'm excited," Pederson said. "I'm thrilled for him. Obviously, it's a good opportunity to continue to lead the football team and it's my job as the head coach to make sure that we move forward. Still got three games remaining in this season and that's our focus."

From the perspective of the 2-11 Giants, things likely don't change that much.

The Eagles still have weapons in the passing game and it was Foles who came in this past Sunday to secure the win at Los Angeles. They also have running back Jay Ajai, a midseason trade who certainly adds a different dynamic out of their backfield.

Foles under center might mean a tweak or two to the offense, but it is doubtful that there will be a massive overhaul.

"I don't think it's going to change all that much for us because you've got to stop that run game. It really didn't matter who was handing it off. Now, I think Foles throws a really good football. That throw he made against the Rams to kind of clinch it, that was perfect," Giants interim head coach Steve Spagnuolo said.

"He threw it, they got a first down and kind of iced it. When he went in there and you watched that game, and he's only played — I think I looked at 26 or 27 plays he's had this year because I don't believe he had any in preseason. And, you watch him in the Rams game. He obviously does a really good job getting ready to play a football game because they didn't skip a beat when he went in there. Didn't look like they limited with any checks or anything. So they've done a good job down there coaching them, and he's obviously a pro at what he does."

Anthony Swarzak can help a Mets bullpen that struggled in 2017. GETTY IMAGES

Mets sign Swarzak for needed pen help

The New York Mets finally made a move at the 2017 MLB Winter Meetings, signing reliever Anthony Swarzak to a two-year, $14 million deal on Wednesday.

It's an important get for an organization that lost out on two of their top targets on Tuesday after Bryan Shaw signed with the Colorado Rockies while Tommy Hunter joined the Philadelphia Phillies.

The 32-year-old Swarzak is coming off the best season of his eight-year MLB career, putting up a 2.33 ERA in 70 appearances (77.1 IP) with the Chicago White Sox and Milwaukee Brewers. A solid 10.6 strikeouts per nine innings mark helped fuel a punchout-to-walks ratio of 4.14 in 2017.

He adds a more reliable option to a Mets' bullpen that has been searching for support for Jeurys Familia, A.J. Ramos and Jerry Blevins. Last year saw the Mets possess one of the worst bullpens in baseball after Familia went down with an injury before dealing Addison Reed to the Boston Red Sox. Their 4.82 ERA was ranked second-worst in the majors.

Swarzak could also see his name added to the mix of Mets closing options. While Familia was the go-to closer over the past three seasons, new manager Mickey Callaway revealed on Tuesday that the Mets are "not locked into" having a set finisher.

New York's new reliever does not bring an extensive arsenal to the mound. He'll come after you with just two pitches, a fastball that averaged 95 miles per hour and a slider that clocks in at around 88 miles per hour. JOE PANTORNO

Ntilikina stepping his game up

New York's rookie point guard is showing signs of maturing in the NBA.

JOE PANTORNO
@JoePantorno
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

Lonzo Ball might have had a few more points, but Frank Ntilikina came alive when it mattered most.

The New York Knicks rookie point guard outdueled the Los Angeles Lakers No. 2-overall pick on Tuesday night in a 113-109 overtime victory at Madison Square Garden, putting up a career-high 13 points with five rebounds and five assists.

Nine of those came in the fourth quarter and overtime as the Frenchman earned some valuable minutes down the stretch.

While this isn't a performance that jumps off the page, it is indicative of the progress Ntilikina has made over his 24 games in the NBA. Especially in his last three.

Over his first 21 games in the league, Ntilikina was living up to the billing of being that pass-first point guard that showed the promise of directing an offense. However, he looked hesitant to shoot or attack the rim, struggling to put together any kind of real scoring threat:

Frank Ntilikina stats: First 21 NBA games

19.3 minutes per game
5.2 points
3.1 assists
1.9 rebounds
3.0 game score
9 three-point field goals made

While three games is a small sample size, you can see Ntilikina is starting to look a little bit more comfortable within the Knicks offense. Most notably on Tuesday night, he hit a career-high three three-pointers after having hit just nine in his first 21 games.

When given space, he wasn't afraid to pull up for a shot and even exhibited a little flash, dishing a no-look pass to Kyle O'Quinn during a closely-contested fourth quarter

You can't be uncomfortable and make a play like that during a two-point game in the final nine minutes.

But let the numbers do the talking, even if it's just three games:

Frank Ntilikina stats: Last 3 games

25.5 minutes per game
10.3 points
4.3 assists
3.3 rebounds
9.4 game score
6 three-point field goals made

Over the past three games, Frank Ntilikina is showing flashes of becoming a very solid point guard. GETTY IMAGES

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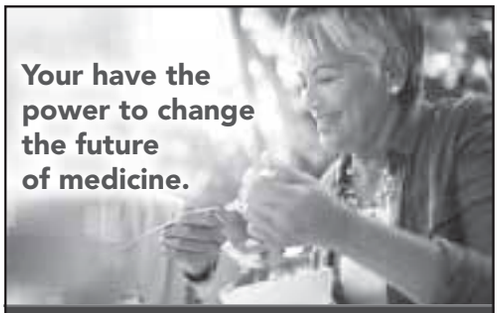

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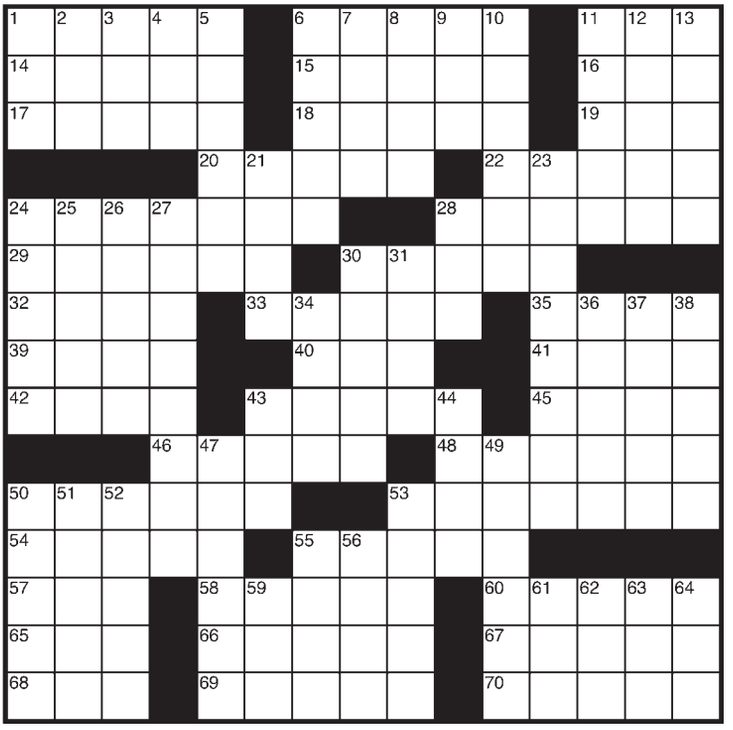
Across

1 Mend
6 Blanch
11 Final letter
14 Crinkled fabric
15 Twilled cotton
16 Krueger's street
17 Princess topper
18 Halos, of sorts
19 Pull someone's leg
20 Avoid
22 Cite
24 Pampered pets (2 wds.)
28 Tousled
29 Actress -- May
30 Farewell
32 Notch shapes
33 Left over
35 Travel far and wide
39 Q.E.D. part
40 Louis XIV, e.g.
41 Brownish-purple
42 Noted lava spewer
43 Bedside fixtures
45 R&B's -- James
46 Does in the dragon
48 Loud squawker
50 Traveled quickly
53 Kind of rhyme
54 Leafy vines
55 Boast about
57 Inventor -- Franklin
58 Rough cabin
60 Bay
65 Unit of energy
66 Scale unit
67 Gawk
68 Apply henna
69 Wasps' homes
70 Rose's defense

Down

1 Interest amt.
2 Jackie's tycoon
3 Reception
4 ER practice
5 -- confrontation (hyph.)
6 Umpteen
7 Gangster
8 Dublin's land
9 Literary compilation
10 Muezzin's temple
11 Low scores
12 Haut monde
13 Fix, as in cement
21 Curved molding
23 Coup leaders
24 Flood barrier
25 Storm warning
26 Song of triumph
27 Aversion
28 "Mamma --!"
30 They can be split
31 Trickle down
34 ER picture (hyph.)
36 Shocking
37 Oscar nominee
38 Substantial
43 Stripling
44 Made yarn
47 Period of instruction
49 Klee or Picasso
50 Agreed
51 Each
52 Faint trace
53 Uses the microwave
55 FedEx trucks
56 No. cruncher
59 Clamor
61 Last degree
62 Philosopher -- Tzu
63 Blow it
64 Dice throw



metro.us/sudoku

easy

6	8				2	1		9
			9	8			3	
					5			8
	3	4		5				
1		8		4		6		3
				3		4	9	
2			7					
	4			2	1			
3		7	4				2	5

hard

	2	7	6				9	
		6					5	8
		5		1	8		7	
		3		2	4			
2								4
			3	8		5		
	3		2	6		9		
6	9					3		
	7				3	6	8	

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Discipline and hard work will pay off. Use your intelligence and experience to ward off a tempting offer from someone who has been a bad influence in the past.

Taurus If you share your emotions with someone you are close to, together you will come up with a unique plan that will help you avoid setbacks or additional debt.

Gemini Make travel plans or set up a business meeting that will help you decide how to move forward. Use your imagination and offer innovative ideas to seal a deal.

Cancer Plan a day trip or shopping spree or make plans to spend time with a loved one. A partnership can be taken to a new level if you discuss your intentions.

Leo Situations at home will be difficult to deal with if you have overspent or been indulgent in any way. You can have fun without going overboard. Put others first.

Virgo You'll learn through observation and mingling with people who are heading in the same direction as you. Networking functions will encourage you to develop new skills.

Libra Don't let someone from your past lead you astray or tempt you to get involved in something unsavory or imprudent. Use your intelligence and make wise choices.

Scorpio Emotional matters should be addressed in a unique manner. Catching someone's attention will help you flesh out some of the details necessary for successful plans.

Sagittarius Dig in and get things done. Your ability to turn something small into something big and meaningful will be impressive. Personal changes are encouraged.

Capricorn Check out your professional options. Using your skills in a different forum will lead to new possibilities. Personal changes can also be put into play.

Aquarius It will be difficult to contain your emotions. Don't let anger set in and take control. Opt to do your own thing, calm down and help those less fortunate.

Pisces Negotiate on your own behalf. Don't leave anything to chance or at the mercy of someone else's judgment. Get personal finances and documents in order. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

M	A	C	A	W		C	A	M	P		C	O	O	T
A	R	E	N	A		A	G	A	R		H	A	L	O
D	O	L	T	S		N	E	R	O		A	K	I	N
A	M	T		S	O	N	S		T	H	I	E	V	E
M	A	S	C	A	R	A		L	E	A	R	N	E	R
			H	I	D		R	O	G	U	E			
R	E	P	E	L		E	A	V	E	S	D	R	O	P
A	S	H			E	D	G	E	S			F	L	A
W	E	I	G	H	T	I	E	R		G	I	D	D	Y
			L	O	A	F	S		C	R	O			
S	P	R	I	N	G	Y		F	I	A	N	C	E	E
C	R	I	N	G	E		L	E	V	Y		R	A	M
A	U	N	T		R	I	O	T		E	L	A	T	E
M	D	S	E		E	R	I	C		S	E	V	E	R
S	E	E	D		S	A	S	H		T	E	E	N	Y

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